

Serial No.: 09/057,313  
Attorney Docket No.: 033449-002  
Amendment

*Sub E1*  
*DX*  
positioning each container at desired locations on said deck by means of said vehicle for transportation by said marine vessel; and  
securing said container to said deck at said locations.

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*DX*  
*Sub E2*  
22. (Twice Amended) A method of offloading containers from a marine vessel comprising the steps of:

selecting a plurality of containers adapted to contain and protect freight in a marine environment located on a deck of a marine vessel, each container having a set of outer walls defining an inner volume and having freight loaded therein;

individually lifting and transporting each container by means of a vehicle over a ramp from a storage deck of a marine vessel, said ramp and storage deck having sufficient strength to support said vehicle when said vehicle is transporting a fully loaded one of said containers;

placing each container at desired locations on an associated dock by said vehicle.

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*DX*  
*Sub E3*  
24. (Twice Amended) A method of transporting containers by a marine vessel comprising the steps of:

selecting a plurality of containers adapted to contain and protect freight in a marine environment, each container having a set of outer walls defining an inner volume;

loading freight into said inner volume;

individually lifting and transporting each container by means of a vehicle over a ramp to a storage deck of a marine vessel, said ramp and storage deck having sufficient strength to support said vehicle when said vehicle is transporting a fully loaded one of said containers;

individually positioning each container in vertical stacks at desired locations on said deck by means of said vehicle for transportation by said marine vessel, and securing said containers in vertical stacks to each other by means of semiautomatic twistlocks;

securing each container to said deck at said locations by semiautomatic twistlocks;

towing said marine vessel with each container secured to said deck thereof from a loading site to a destination site; and

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D3 Sub E3 / offloading each container from said vessel at said destination site by a reach stacker vehicle.

D4 Sub E3 /  
✓ 25. (Thrice Amended) A method of transporting containers with a marine vessel comprising the steps of:  
selecting a plurality of containers adapted to contain and protect freight in a marine environment, each container having a set of outer walls defining an inner volume and having freight loaded therein;  
lifting a container by means of a vehicle;  
causing said vehicle to travel over a ramp to a storage deck of a marine vessel, said ramp and storage deck having sufficient strength to support said vehicle when said vehicle is transporting a fully loaded one of said containers;  
positioning said container at a desired location on said deck by means of said vehicle; and  
repeating said lifting, causing and positioning steps for each of said plurality of containers.

✓ Cancel claims 29-31 without prejudice.

Add the following new claims:

D5 ✓ 32. The method of claim 25 wherein each container includes a bottom, a roof, and a plurality of side walls extending between said bottom and said roof to thereby define said inner volume.

33. The method of claim 16 wherein said loading step includes a workman or a vehicle at least partially entering into said container to load said freight.

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34. The method of claim 25 wherein said lifting, causing and positioning steps are carried out by a reach stacker.

*D5 Sub #2*  
35. The method of claim 25 further comprising the steps of securing said containers to said deck at said locations, and towing said marine vessel with said containers secured to said deck thereof to a destination site

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*Add E4*

**Remarks**

Claim 16, 22, 24 and 25 have been amended, claims 29-31 have been canceled, and new claims 32-35 have been added. A marked-up copy of claims 16, 22, 24 and 25 identifying the changes thereto accompanies this Amendment. Review and reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Claims 16, 21, 22, 25-27, 29 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 4,325,667 to Freeman. The applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the courtesy of a telephone conference on August 2, 2001 to discuss the Freeman reference. During that conversation the Examiner indicated that the primary portion of the Freeman reference relied upon in the rejection of the claims is the description of a "prior art" method in a portion of the Freeman reference. In particular, the Examiner indicated that the process of shipping sugar that is described at column 1, lines 20-39 of the Freeman reference may be particularly relevant. Furthermore, the Examiner indicated that it is the pallets of that section of the Freeman reference, and not the bags of sugar, that are being analogized to the containers of the claims of the present application.

Accordingly, claims 16, 22, 24 and 25 have been amended to clarify that the containers of the present invention include an inner volume and that the freight is loaded inside inner volume. In contrast, in the pallets of the Freeman reference, the freight is merely stacked thereon. Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 16, 22, 24 and 25 patentably define over the Freeman reference.